



## COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF STOCKTON AND SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY

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142 North California Street

Stockton, California

### SUMMARY REPORT OF THE TRANSIENT RELIEF COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF STOCKTON AND SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY, JANUARY 1958-JANUARY 1959

The transient problem continues to be one of the major social problems of Stockton. At the request of the United Crusade and many other organizations, the Community Council undertook this study. The problem was divided into five parts, covered in greater detail in five separate reports which are available through the Community Council office.

Many of the people who are experts in San Joaquin County on the various aspects of the transient relief problems were members of this committee, representing the major points of view about these problems. The committees heard a great amount of testimony, visited the missions, sent out questionnaires, and gathered a great amount of data, and then tried to come to some consensus about the problem. This report represents the high degree of agreement which is possible among persons from widely divergent viewpoints on this problem. The sub-committee report on General Transient Relief contains some of the area upon which agreement wasn't possible.

#### GENERAL TRANSIENT RELIEF

The farm labor problem is greater now than 5 or 10 years ago. While crop production has become more mechanized, most crop harvesting has not. There is increased need for temporary labor to harvest such crops as tomatoes.

While many farm laborers are not community liabilities, a majority of those seeking assistance claim to be farm laborers; because they can not or do not hold other jobs, they move into the unskilled seasonal farm labor force. Agriculture is not solely responsible for the transient or migrant worker. Low wages, poor housing, alcohol, short seasonal work peaks, and long periods between employment are some basic aspects of the problem.

The following appears to be happening to our labor force:

1. An increasing number of unskilled workers looking for work this past year, and a decreasing number of the more dependable, industrious farm laborers.
2. A decrease in student and resident seasonal labor and interstate migrant families; an increase in the number of welfare requests, and men coming to the missions.
3. Many farm laborers, who are not now "drunks" or "winos", are becoming "drunks" and "winos" and this is happening at an alarming rate.

Many of the farm labor families have internal problems which long periods of unemployment may bring to a head. There is real pressure for the man to leave the family for transient farm labor and skid row, with the family going

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on welfare, often at as good a living standard as the best that an unskilled farm laborer can provide.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. As a long-range goal it is desirable to stabilize employment and reduce the great seasonal fluctuations. A program of preferential employment, housing, and welfare services might help stabilize a good resident farm labor force.
2. Measures should be taken to reduce the availability of alcohol before and during the working day.
3. Consider the provision of a temporary center for recreation (TV, coffee, cards, newspapers, showers, etc.) to break the tavern route to alcoholism, vagrancy and jail.
4. The state should establish an economical isolation center for chronic alcoholics and vagrants, to be located away from cities (desert or mountain area) so as to provide adequate work therapy. Confinement should be for indefinite terms, with release depending upon psychiatric recommendation.
5. A Valley-wide conference on the migrant and migrant aid is most important.
6. A permanent committee on transient aid problems should be established by the Community Council.

#### FREE FEEDING PROGRAMS

In 1957 over 200,000 free meals were served single men through four missions or agencies. The February 1958 average of 959 meals given each day to somewhere between 550 and 850 men was a definite increase over 1957.

Neither the quality (though wholesome) nor quantity of the free meals served attract any appreciable number of single men to Stockton. These meals do keep these men from starving.

If the feeding programs were closed down, a few would probably starve to death and others would turn to stealing, mooching, begging, personal attack or shoplifting. Not to provide meals would invite a threat to the security of our community, aside from any moral values. These programs are providing a much needed service. The findings of the City Manger's "Mission Report" were re-confirmed.

Many of these men are very lonely with tremendous problems (in almost every respect) and poor chances of being rehabilitated at this time. The free meals programs are practically the only entering wedge we have for rehabilitation even though very few are rehabilitated.

Until the community is ready to undertake a costly rehabilitation program, its citizens should not complain about the inconvenience of the feeding programs.



### MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR FAMILY AID

The basic policies of our community as determined by community attitudes appear to be:

1. to keep people from starving
2. to discourage, as much as possible, any dependency
3. to discourage true transients, who may be passing through Stockton and who want to keep moving, from remaining in Stockton, and in general keep these transients transient. This is in contrast to those who have a strong desire to settle down.

In general, the minimum standards for transient families in our community includes: meals; lodging; occasionally, gasoline, transportation or bus tokens; but definitely not money.

There are no minimum standards which can be equally applied to all transient families even on food and shelter.

Really to solve the transient problem, people in our community must be willing to foot the bill. Only a partial, and not totally satisfactory, solution is possible at best at the local level, until there are also efforts by the state and federal government.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The Committee feels that this is primarily a public agency problem which should be handled by the public agencies. Additional and more complete legislation may be needed. Until there is unity of public opinion about this as a public agency function, individual churches and groups will continue to give aid.
2. It is urgently recommended that steps be taken to insure closer coordination between the organizations now working with transient cases, including a clearer definition of policies.
3. Additional and more complete legislation may be needed:
  - a) so that public agencies can handle the basic welfare problems
  - b) to curtail assistance to the irresponsible interstate migrants who repeatedly travel at state expense in being returned to their places of residence by the state.

### EMERGENCY AID AFTER 5 P. M.

1. A vast amount of aid is given without adequate safeguards and willing contributors are easy prey for fraudulent requests for aid.



2. After hours aid should be of the most temporary nature.
  - a. Churches and agencies (not including County Welfare) returning a questionnaire showed 2,412 requests for aid during February and March, 1958, of which 1,768 were directly aided and 554 referred. Of these 1,084 were after hours, of which 331 were families.
3. The Sheriff's Office should use County Welfare after hours; and the Stockton Police, their United Crusade revolving fund.
4. The suggestion of a central clearing house was not recommended, but the proposed permanent Community Council Transient Relief Committee should develop a common system of meal and lodging vouchers.

#### URBAN RENEWAL

While the East Stockton Project will effect relatively few transient families, the West End project will destroy the skid-row area which houses most of the transient men.

While some of these men will not return to Stockton, many will relocate here.

The Committee recommends a single transient center which would have all facilities for members of the migrant farm labor force, transients in general, and even vagrants now housed in the West End. A permanent committee of the various relief agencies should cooperatively plan coordinated services for the transients in this center and work with the Urban Redevelopment Agency in planning it.



MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSIENT RELIEF OF THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

(Organizational affiliation is for identification purposes only. These members served as individuals representing their own points of view.)

CHAIRMAN - ALLEN REED, Housing Authority

CO-CHAIRMEN - DAVID BRUNER, College of Pacific Sociology Dept.; FATHER McCULLOUGH, St. Linus Mission; CHARLES JAMES, Attorney.

SUB-COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN - MRS. ARNOLD RUE, A.A.U.W., Redevelopment Agency; DR. BURKE BRADLEY, Pres. Stockton College; LES MOYLE, Mgr. Asparagus Growers Ass'n.; REV. JAMES BAIRD, 1st Presbyterian Church; CHARLES JAMES, Attorney.

ALLEN CORREN, No. Kiwanis Club  
BEN ENSLEY, State Hospital  
KATHLEEN SHANNON, College of Pacific  
MIKE CANLIS, Under Sheriff  
CHIEF JACK O'KEEFE, Police Chief  
LOU TSUNEKAWA, Japanese-American League  
JACK BEYER, Past Pres. Ed Stewart Post  
American Legion  
DAVID EPSTEIN, Bargain Spot, West End  
Merchant  
JOHN J. GREEN, Stkn. Council of Churches  
AVERY KIZER, YMCA Board  
C. A. STUART, Dir. County Welfare Dept.  
FATHER ALLEN MCCOY, St. Mary's  
MRS. NETTIE HUEY, County Welfare Dept.  
JOYCE EPSER, American Legion  
ROBERT BRISSENDEN, S. J. General Hospital  
JAMES CLOUSE, Housing Authority  
FRED DEBENEDETTI, Rancher, Linden  
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SUREATHA WILLIAMS  
MISS BERNICE FRANKENHEIMER, T.B. Ass'n.  
MRS. URIEL SHIELDS, Stkn. Unified School  
Dist., Delta Kappa Gamma  
J. A. LACY, American Legion  
MRS. HOWARD GIBSON, American Legion Aux.  
MRS. DEWEY PASQUINI, Latare Club  
F. S. FREDRICKS, Probation Office  
DR. DAVID STADTNER, M.D.  
JOSE ALBA, Insurance Agent  
RALPH O'JEDA, St. Vincent DePaul  
JOHN LILLY, City Manager  
JIM GARDNER, City Planning Director  
DON LAYSON, Sanitarian  
JOE REYES, West End Druggist

AL BAINBRIDGE, Farm Labor, Dept. of  
Employment  
HENRY HANSEN, Central Labor Council  
CAPT. OSCAR YOUNGQUIST, Salvation Army  
WILLIAM SCHULZ, JR., Vet. Service Officer  
DR. ARNOLD SHEUERMAN, Alcoholic Clinic  
HON. ALAN SHORT, Senator  
BILL DOZIER, Municipal Court Judge  
REV. AUSTIN WILLIAMS  
ELWOOD HOUSE, SUSD, Welfare & Attendance  
MRS. E. C. WOODRUFF, School Board and  
Probation Committee  
JOE SIMS, Stkn. State Hospital  
JOSEPH PEIRANO  
C. L. DUNNING, Painters Union  
JOHN DILLON, Cannery Union  
ALEX G. SPANOS  
MISS IRENE HARRIS  
JOHN HIRTEN, Redevelopment Agency Dir.  
HOWARD WILSON, Tomato Growers Ass'n.  
CHARLES COOPER, Farm Bureau  
MRS. WALTER DIETZ, P.T.A. Welfare Chm.  
MRS. LILLIAN WILLIAMS  
JALWANT SINGH, Labor Contractor  
GRAHAM RIDLEY, Engineer  
LOUIE HERNANDEZ, Community Service Organ.  
BOB DEVERE, Dept. of Vocational Rehab.  
RAUL AGUILOR, Farm labor union  
CARL ELLISON, Gospel Center  
BUD DINGMAN

BLUE CARSTENSON, Ex-Officio  
Executive Secretary - Community Council